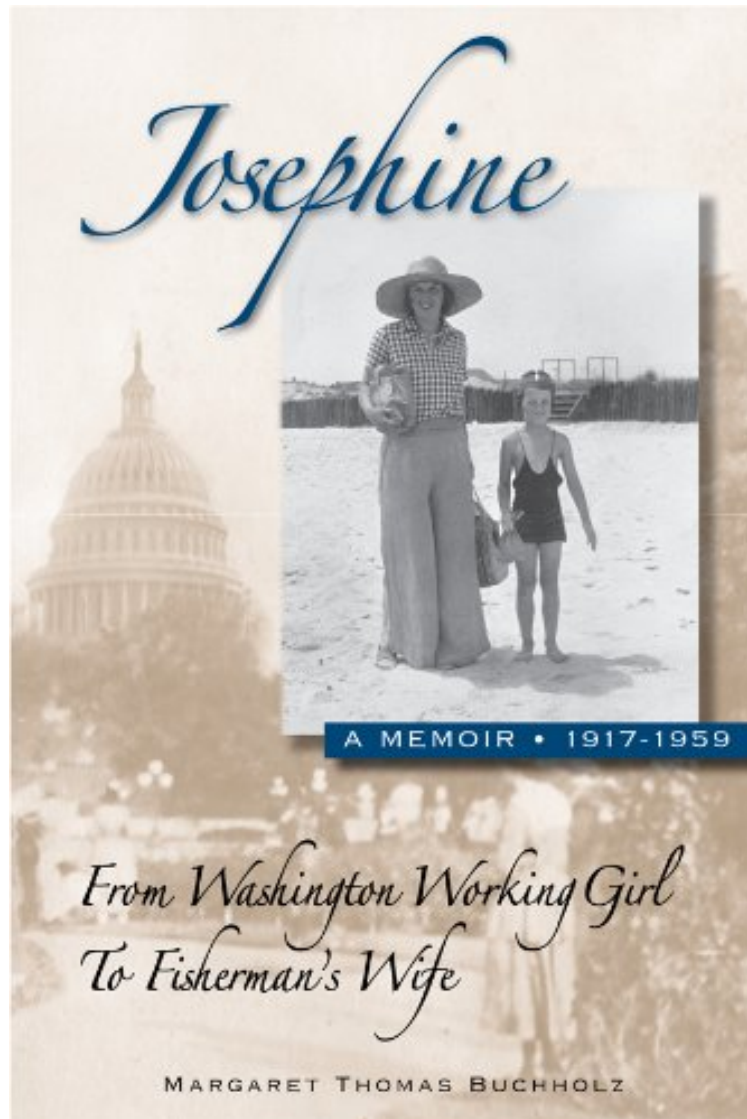


[Ebook pdf] Josephine: From Washington Working Girl to Fisherman's Wife, A Memoir 1917-1959

Josephine: From Washington Working Girl to Fisherman's Wife, A Memoir 1917-1959

Margaret Thomas Buchholz, Foreword by Mark St. Germain
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Margaret Thomas Buchholz, Foreword by Mark St. Germain : Josephine: From Washington Working Girl to Fisherman's Wife, A Memoir 1917-1959 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Josephine: From Washington Working Girl to Fisherman's Wife, A Memoir 1917-1959:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Compelling Memoir of Her Gifted Mother By Susan F. Falknor Margaret Thomas Buchholtz has made available to us the life and writings of her mother, Josephine Lehman,

who lived from 1898 to 1959. The writing style of both mother and daughter is clear, vigorous, and witty - while the angular bones of the narrative ride comfortably just beneath the rich story details. Hailing from Michigan, Jo in 1917 got herself a job in in the War Department in Washington, D.C. Her diary, as edited by her daughter Margaret, details the life of a Government Girl of the early Twentieth Century -- painstaking work, living in a boarding house, attending dances, entertaining wounded soldiers at Walter Reed hospital, and of course flirtation. In the summer of 1919, our paths crossed - well, sort of. Jo spent time in the village of Bluemont, Virginia, on the Blue Ridge. And, 82 years later, my husband and I made our home in Bluemont. World War I over, Josephine came to Bluemont to assist author Frank Carpenter and his wife Joanna. They all stayed in a gracious stone house on the top of the Blue Ridge christened "Joannasberg" - from whose veranda visitors could see across into four states : Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. In another connection, Jo's diary recalls visits to Joannasberg for betting on shooting pool from young Dr. Henry Plaster, father of my current neighbor, also named Henry Plaster. Beyond the Bluemont connection, as a young woman I too earned my bread with editorial work in Washington, D.C. -- and I too had a Midwestern mother for whom writing came as easily as talking. Expectedly, the first few chapters of this book fascinated me - but then I found the rest of the story just as engaging. In 1929, as a researcher for the lionized author Lowell Thomas , Jo lived for a time brushing shoulders with the wealthy and powerful, even cruising the Caribbean in the capacious yacht of a German count. In 1930, she met Reynold Thomas ("Tommy"--no relation to Jo's employer), marrying the next year. Tommy, who had been "shell shocked" during World War I, had been advised to work outdoors - hence he became a commercial fisherman in the seaside town of Harvey Cedars, New Jersey. The long depression takes a toll on the couple - stealing any value of family investments settled on the young pair and throwing them back on their own resources. They lived a hard but loving family life in the 1930s, until privation eased for them, as for most other American families, in the 1940s and 1950s. I strongly recommend this excellent read. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Poignant Journey of a Remarkable Woman By Louise Josephine Lehman's story begins in Michigan where she was born in 1898 and grew up on a farm. When the bright young Jo becomes a reporter for the local paper, the reader senses that her adventures are soon to follow. In 1918, she takes a giant leap and heads for Washington DC to work for the Department of War. She was not alone; many girls who had never been away from home became "government girls." But Jo, a gifted writer, took the time to record her experiences in her diary and letters to her family. Thanks to Josephine's daughter, author Margaret Thomas Buchholz, we are privileged to read Jo's thoughts and enjoy lively accounts of her activities. Children love the thrill of discovering dusty old letters and scrapbooks that are private and forbidden. We feel the adult Margaret's childish wonder surfacing when she comes across her mother's papers in the window seat and attic of her Jersey Shore home on Long Beach Island. Jo had saved almost everything! Over a period of years, the author painstakingly pieced together the remnants of her mother's life, creating an articulate memoir that is a joy to read. The clicking of typewriter keys and waving of flags transport us back to the nation's capital during The Great War. Jo roomed with other young women in boardinghouses. Always conscious of her height (the statuesque Jo was 5'10"), she tells of her "Adventures with Boys" and how she volunteers to "cheer up" wounded soldiers at a hospital. The accounts of her dates and the morality of the era are especially fun to read. In 1919, Jo takes a job in Washington as assistant to the aging and wealthy travel writer Frank Carpenter. Her accounts of the time she spends at the Carpenter family's vacation retreat in Bluemont, Virginia, are delightful. Later, Jo lands a position as a researcher and ghostwriter with the famous adventurer and broadcaster Lowell Thomas. She travels to faraway places, rides in an airplane, goes on a Caribbean cruise, interviews U-boat captains for a book, and fits right in with the spirited lifestyle of the Roaring Twenties. Josephine: From Washington Working Girl to Fisherman's Wife is like two distinct books joined at the hip. Jo's life as a single young writer and her time as a housewife and mother after she marries Reynold Thomas (no relation to Lowell) in 1931 represent very different worlds. We learn that he's a loving and hardworking man, a former marine. Jo and Tom (Reynold) were married secretly and we wonder why. But, in fact, author Buchholz doesn't even know the answer. After Jo moves to the desolate but rapidly developing Long Beach Island, she adjusts to a plainer life. Her husband works as a commercial fisherman and later runs a dredging business. She penned a beautiful essay called "Fisherman's Wife" that was published in Scribner's magazine in 1933. The money from that piece helped the family during the hard times of the Great Depression. (It's retold in an illustrated version published in 2008 and in this book). As a busy mother of two, Margaret and her younger brother Michael, Jo cooks, bakes, sews and takes meticulous care of the kids but longs to write. She says, "Here I live, piling up the most marvelous material for writing, but it's almost impossible to find the time or strength to do it. I still write all the time in spirit, and in another two years, when Michael is in school, I don't see why I can't put in at least five mornings a week at steady work." Life on the island is vividly recalled not only by Jo in letters to her sister, but also by Margaret. Both mother and daughter write for a seasonal island newspaper. Margaret is not just the keeper of her mother's memoirs; she evolves as a major player in the book. It is Margaret, affectionately nicknamed "Pooch" (a name she didn't like but it has stuck with her), who mesmerizes the reader with descriptions of bleak winters, devastating hurricanes, and a personal tragedy. The omnipresent voice of author Margaret is evident throughout the book. She comments and pulls everything together with her skill as a fine journalist and paints a realistic portrait of her mother. She researched background material and visited places where her mother

lived to get the facts. However, Margaret's sensitivity shines through, becoming increasingly strong as the book progresses. She has carefully planned what to write and yet she is undeniably emotional. Without her tears, this memoir would be lacking in depth. It's hard to put this marvelous book down. The details are so rich that even the endnotes are fascinating. Vintage photographs provide added interest and each chapter begins with a significant excerpted quote that grabs the reader's attention. I highly recommend *Josephine: From Washington Working Girl to Fisherman's Wife*. It's both a well-crafted memoir/biography that recreates a remarkable woman's life and the story of a mother-daughter relationship packed with intensity. Perhaps we cannot truly know our mothers until they are gone. Time helps to sort things out. Maybe writing a memoir is the best path to understanding. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful story By Lily F. I love Long Beach Island and have spent two weeks there for most of my 47 years of life. It was lovely to hear of the way it used to be many years ago and how WW2 affected the inhabitants of LBI. Josephine was an amazing woman and to read about the time she lived in and how things were then was fascinating. The writing is superb. I loved the book!

During World War I, before women had the right to vote in America, a young Josephine Lehman Thomas answered the patriotic call from Washington, D.C. and became one of the pioneering "government girls," leaving her home in Michigan for adventure in the nation's capital. Through explored diaries and letters, her daughter, Margaret Thomas Buchholz, gives us an amazing chronicle of a trailblazing woman. Josephine worked for legendary journalist Lowell Thomas and traveled the world until the Great Depression dropped her and her new family, struggling to get by, on an island off the coast of New Jersey. This fascinating personal history reveals the optimism of the early 20th Century, the emerging professional woman, the thrill of adventure travel and a sense of success, followed by the crash of the economy, losing everything, and ultimately happiness in a simple life by the sea.

"Josephine is an amazingly good writer whose work deserves to be read." -- Frederic D. Schwarz, former Senior Editor, *American Heritage Magazine* "Margaret Buchholz's loving account of her mother's adventures from World War I until the 1950s, paints a beautiful portrait of a woman ahead of her time, and the deep mother/daughter relationship and their shared bond to Barnegat Bay. Josephine was one of the pioneering women "government girls" in D.C. After the war, she worked as a writer/researcher for the famous travel author and radio personality, Lowell Thomas, before she took up island life as a fisherman's wife. Margaret Buchholz's prose flows with the hypnotic ebb of the tides and I found myself mesmerized as well as charmed." -- Laura Shaine Cunningham, author of the memoirs *Sleeping Arrangements* and *A Place in the Country*. "From the colorful and beautifully written diaries of her mother Josephine Lehman, framed by her own painstaking research, Margaret Buchholz has crafted a luminous biography of a spirited woman and her journey through the first half of the 20th century. Life dealt Josephine both extraordinary opportunities and devastating setbacks, and she navigated them all with panache. I loved reading this book." -- Mary Walton, author of *A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot*. "The words and thoughts of gifted letter-writer and diarist, Josephine Lehman, capture the excitement and challenges of women working in Washington, DC during WWI. Jo was a true trailblazer when she answered the call for patriotic young women to work in our Nation's capital during a time of uncertainty and turmoil. I loved hearing firsthand about Jo's adventures and experiences. Even though her words were written during another time, they are relevant and timely today. Washington has changed a great deal for the female government employee and we owe our start to brave and exciting women like Jo." -- Krysta Harden, 21st Century "Government Girl" "I love the way the author weaves rich material with her own observations. All to the good effect of recapturing Jo's life. A labor of love but also a real contribution to history, this story of a latter day Jo from *Little Women*." -- Daniel Horowitz, Mary Huggins Gamble Professor of American Studies Emeritus, Smith College. "Through diaries, letters, dogged research and a keen, exacting memory, Buchholz writes the book her mother might have written had she not had children. In a marvelous reversal of nature, a daughter gives life to a mother." -- Helene Stapinski, author of *Five-Finger Discount: A Crooked Family History* -- Advance Reader s About the Author MARGARET THOMAS BUCHHOLZ is co-author of *Great Storms of the Jersey Shore*, author of *New Jersey Shipwrecks: 350 Years in the Graveyard of the Atlantic*, and editor of *Shore Chronicles: Diaries and Travelers Tales from the Jersey Shore 1764-1955*, among other books. Her essays about the Shore have also been included in anthologies and collections. Buchholz was publisher of the Long Beach Island newspaper *The Beachcomber* from 1955 to 1987 and is still an editor. She currently lives year-round in her childhood home (described in this book) in Harvey Cedars, New Jersey, on Barnegat Bay, where her family has been coming since 1833.